



PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE U.S. PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

March 1, 2004

Applicant(s): Hiroyuki MAEDA

For: OPERATING UNIT OF A VEHICLE HAVING AN AUTOMATIC BRAKING  
DEVICE

Serial No.: 09/648 290

Group: 3661

Confirmation No.: 5582

Filed: August 24, 2000

Examiner: B. BROADHEAD

International Application No.: N/A

International Filing Date: N/A

Atty. Docket No.: OPS Case 500

Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

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**GROUP 3600**

COMBINED RESPONSE AND REQUEST FOR EXAMINER INTERVIEW

Sir:

Applicant hereby files an RCE. It is noted that an Amendment Before First Office Action was submitted on August 29, 2003 prior to issuance of the final Office Action, but this Amendment was not formally considered in the final Office Action. The Amendment contains additional comments as well as additional claims for consideration by the Examiner. By the filing of this RCE, Applicant respectfully requests entry of the Amendment and reconsideration of the pending rejections.

It is noted that the specific rejections in the final Office Action appear to be verbatim to those of the prior Office Action to which the August 29 Amendment are directed. Hence, the August 29 Amendment is adopted herein as a reply to the final Office Action and reconsideration of the current rejection is requested. As to the Examiner's response in the final Office Action, Applicant submits the following additional comments.

As to the presence of controls in the James vehicle, such controls would not be used on the main highway system, i.e. on the open roads, since this would negate the whole purpose of the James system which is to remove manual control from the vehicle operator during this period. Hence, one would still not add the features of Tognazzini patent to James since it also is designed for the open road but would not be used in the computer controlled vehicle of James.

Still further, even if combined, Applicant still believes the resulting combination differs from Applicant's claimed invention and there is no motivation to make modifications thereto. As to the statement that in Tognazzini, the "speed is transmitted from the road sensors and then "set" in the vehicle.", the undersigned respectfully requests further discussion and clarification of this point. Tognazzini is not believed to disclose such a speed "set" inside the vehicle, much less the additional structure of an automatic braking system which automatically reduces the traveling speed to the set target speed in response to a control signal merely indicating the presence of a danger state.

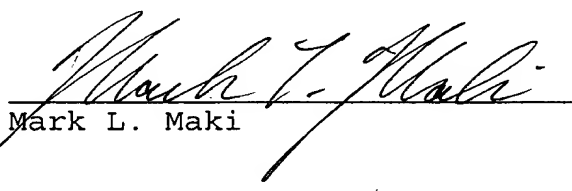
Hence the prior art does not disclose a target speed set or stored in a vehicle and an automatic braking device which reduces the speed to the set speed automatically once the device is triggered.

As to new Claims 25 and 26, these further distinguish from the prior art. For example, Claim 25 recites that the target speed is "stored inside the vehicle" and Claim 26 defines the braking device as having a target speed setting device "in which is stored a target traveling speed". Claim 25 also defines the braking device as automatically reducing the speed "without requiring braking by said operator or receipt of additional transmitter signals." Similar language is present in Claim 26. Detailed consideration of Claims 25 and 26 also is requested.

Further, Applicant's undersigned representative formally requests scheduling of an Examiner interview to discuss the

rejections in detail. The undersigned intends to contact the Examiner in the near future, although if such an interview has not yet been arranged by time of receipt of this Request, the undersigned respectfully requests direct contact from the Examiner to schedule the interview at a mutually agreeable time.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Mark L. Maki

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FLYNN, THIEL, BOUTELL  
& TANIS, P.C.  
2026 Rambling Road  
Kalamazoo, MI 49008-1631  
Phone: (269) 381-1156  
Fax: (269) 381-5465

Dale H. Thiel	Reg. No. 24	323
David G. Boutell	Reg. No. 25	072
Ronald J. Tanis	Reg. No. 22	724
Terryence F. Chapman	Reg. No. 32	549
Mark L. Maki	Reg. No. 36	589
Liane L. Churney	Reg. No. 40	694
Brian R. Tumm	Reg. No. 36	328
Steven R. Thiel	Reg. No. 53	685
Sidney B. Williams, Jr.	Reg. No. 24	949

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